



## M/V NEW CARISSA

Grounding

Waldport, Oregon

Unified Command Decision Memo

16465

April 19, 1999

Final Disposal Operations - Addendum to Final Disposal Plan Dated March 10, 1999

1. On March 11, 1999, a joint task force consisting of assets/units from U. S. Coast Guard Air Station/Group North Bend, the U. S. Navy Eleventh Northwest EOD team, USS DAVID R RAY, USS BREMERTON, a U. S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Portland Naval Architect/Marine Engineer and a U. S. Navy P-3 Orion completed the sinking of M/V NEW CARISSA. It was successfully sunk in position 43 degrees 31.6 minutes North, 130 degrees 26.6 minutes West in 1811 fathoms of water, approximately 282 nautical miles west of the Oregon Coast.

2. Operations for the disposal of the bow section began early on March 11, 1999, when members of the Eleventh NW EOD team and the Coast Guard Naval Architect/Marine Engineer were placed aboard the bow section using a Coast Guard helo. Once aboard the bow section, the Eleventh NW EOD team, with guidance from the Coast Guard Naval Architect/Marine Engineer, strategically placed 400 pounds of high explosives to initiate progressive flooding/scuttling of the vessel by the stern. The teams were then extracted from the bow section and at 1408U the Eleventh NW EOD team detonated the explosives from aboard USS DAVID R RAY. Immediately following the detonation of the explosive, USS DAVID R RAY initiated 69 rounds of naval gunfire directed at the waterline of the bow section on the port and starboard sides. This gunfire was used to enhance the damage done by the Eleventh NW EOD team explosive charges and to ventilate the bow section to ensure the continuation of progressive flooding. Immediately following the detonation and gunfire, the Commanding Officer of USS DAVID R RAY observed the bow section beginning to sink by the stern. The bow section of the vessel continued to sink for the next thirty to forty minutes before appearing to settle in place, and stabilize with no further evidence of sinking noted. At this time, the Commanding Officer of USS DAVID R RAY began to assess the need for additional assets to continue to sink the bow section. This assessment was based on several factors including but not limited to the following: (1) the mission requirement to complete the sinking; (2) the impending adverse weather which had already begun to build high seas and strong winds; (3) approaching sunset; (4) concerns for dangers associated with a partially floating, unlit hazard to navigation; and (5) the potential difficulties and life safety risks associated with recapturing the bow section; (6) the safety of all personnel involved in the scuttling operation. With these factors in mind, the Commanding Officer of USS DAVID R RAY made the decision to use assets from USS BREMERTON to finish the disposal. After addressing safety concerns for vessels on scene, USS BREMERTON was ordered to fire one MK-48 torpedo at the bow section. At 1543U, this order was carried out, and the torpedo struck the partially floating bow section. Immediately following the torpedo launch and strike, the Commanding Officer of USS DAVID R RAY reported that the bow section rolled slightly to starboard then sank by the stern in 1811 fathoms of water. After the bow section was completely out of sight, the Commanding Officer of

USS DAVID R RAY reported sighting from seven miles an oil slick of approximately 1000 yards in the location where the bow section sank. USS DAVID R RAY immediately dispatched the OSRV OREGON RESPONDER to the sinking site in order to attempt oil recovery. Upon arrival at the sinking position, OSRV OREGON RESPONDER, F/V MISS LAW, Tug SEA VICTORY and Tug NATOMA conducted an extensive search for floating oil without success.

3. In reviewing these operations, the Unified Command found that the actions taken by the joint task force were consistent with the authority and measures outlined in the National Contingency Plan (40 CFR 300.415). In addition, the specific actions carried out by the joint task force in disposing of the bow section of the M/V NEW CARISSA were found to be consistent with the Unified Commands' overall objectives of safety of life and protection of the environment.

4. The undersigned concur that these steps were the most logical and appropriate steps for reducing the threat posed by the remaining oil onboard the bow section of M/V NEW CARISSA.

M. J. HALL  
Captain, USCG  
FOSC  
April 19, 1999  
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J. J. GALLAGHER  
Gallagher Marine Systems  
RP OSC (Acting)

L. G. GARNER  
Oregon DEQ  
SOSC (Acting)